

Message Text

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TAGS: SOPN, UR, PARM, MCAP

SUBJECT: PRESS MATERIAL

1. HERewith FULL TEXT MICHAEL GETLER PAGE 2 BYLINER, TUESDAY, MAY 20, WASHINGTON POST, HEADLINED "SOVIETS SAID TO EASE U.S. SUSPICIONS OF ARMS VIOLATIONS".

2. ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS CLOSE TO THE US-SOVIET STRATEGIC ARMS TALKS CLAIM THAT THE RUSSIANS HAVE EASED SOME U.S. SUSPICIONS THAT THEY MAY HAVE BEEN VIOLATING OR TAKING ADVANTAGE OF EARLIER JOINT AGREEMENTS ON LIMITING NUCLEAR WEAPONS.

3. THESE OFFICIALS ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THE U.S. MILITARY IS SOMEWHAT LESS CONVINCED THAN CIVILIAN OFFICIALS BY THE SOVIET EXPLANATIONS, BUT INSIST THAT PROGRESS IN PUTTING THESE ISSUES TO REST HAS BEEN MADE.

4. LAST FALL, SOME INTELLIGENCE AND MILITARY OFFICIALS WERE UNCLASSIFIED

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CONCERNED THAT THE RUSSIANS WERE BUILDING NEW MISSILE SILOS, IN VIOLATION OF A 1972 ARMS AGREEMENT, AND CAMOUFLAGING THIS CONSTRUCTION WITH CLAIMS THAT THE NEW HOLES IN THE GROUND WERE FOR NEW COMMAND POSTS TO CONTROL EXISTING MISSILES.

5. THERE WAS ALSO CONCERN THAT THE SOVIETS HAD DEVELOPED A NEW MOBILE RADAR WHICH COULD BE USED AS PART OF AN ANTI-BALLISTIC MISSILE (ABM) DEFENSE SYSTEM. IF TRUE, THIS COULD ALSO BE A VIOLATION OF THE 1972 TREATY LIMITING RIVAL ABM SYSTEMS.

6. OTHER CONCERNS INCLUDED CLAIMS IN SOME QUARTERS THAT THE SOVIETS WERE PUTTING COVERS OVER THEIR SUBMARINE CONSTRUCTION FACILITIES SO THAT US SATELLITES COULD NOT MONITOR HOW MANY MISSILE-CARRYING SUBMARINES THE RUSSIANS WERE BUILDING.

7. THESE CONCERNS, WHICH WERE NOT SHARED BY MANY OTHER OFFICIALS, NEVERTHELESS WERE TAKEN BY THE UNITED STATES TO THE CONSULTATIVE COMMISSION SET UP BY BOTH SUPERPOWERS TO AIR SUCH INDICATIONS OF NON-COMPLIANCE WITH THE INITIAL ARMS AGREEMENTS.

8. ACCORDING TO U.S. OFFICIALS, THE SOVIETS REPLIED WITH A CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF TECHNICAL DATA TO BACK UP THEIR CLAIM THAT COMMAND POSTS AND NOT ADDITIONAL MISSILES WERE BEING INSTALLED.

9. THERE ARE LIKELY TO BE ABOUT 100 SUCH COMMAND POSTS, SO THIS WAS AMONG THE MOST IMPORTANT CONCERNS OF US NEGOTIATORS.

10. U.S. OFFICIALS SAY THE PRINCIPAL CONCERN WAS THAT THE COMMAND POST EXCAVATIONS LOOKED JUST LIKE MISSILE SILOS AND THAT EVEN IF A COMMAND POST WAS INSTALLED IN THE UNDERGROUND CHAMBER, IT MIGHT BE DESIGNED SO THAT IT COULD BE QUICKLY LIFTED OUT AND BE REPLACED BY A MISSILE.

11. APPARENTLY, THE SOVIETS SUPPLIED DATA SHOWING THAT THE COMMAND POSTS FIXTURES WERE PERMANENT AND COULD NOT BE REMOVED AND PROVIDED OTHER DETAILS WHICH PRESUMABLY WOULD UNCLASSIFIED

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ALLOW U.S. PICTURE-TAKING SATELLITES TO VERIFY THE INSTALLATIONS AS COMMAND POSTS.

12. THE SOVIETS REPORTEDLY ALSO AGREED NOT TO OPERATE THEIR NEW RADAR DURING TESTS OF MISSILES. THE RUSSIANS APPARENTLY CLAIMED THE RADAR WAS FOR ANTI-BOMBER DEFENSE, BUT THE UNITED STATES FELT THAT IF IT WAS OPERATED DURING MISSILE TEST FLIGHTS -- TO SEE HOW IT WORKED -- IT COULD ALSO BE DEVELOPED AS AN ABM RADAR.

13. THE DISPUTE OVER ALLEGEDLY COVERING UP SUBMARINE CONSTRUCTION AREAS REPORTEDLY DISSOLVED AFTER THE SOVIETS MADE SIMILAR ALLEGATIONS ABOUT THE UNITED STATES.

14. AS SECRETARY OF STATE HENRY A. KISSINGER AND SOVIET FOREIGN MINISTER ANDREI A. GROMYKO ARE MEETING IN VIENNA TO TRY TO WORK OUT PROBLEMS THAT STILL STAND IN THE WAY OF A NEW ARMS ACCORD BEING SIGNED AT A SEPTEMBER SUMMIT MEETING IN THIS COUNTRY, THERE HAVE BEEN INDICATIONS OF SHIFTING U.S. POSITIONS ON SEVERAL ISSUES.

15. KISSINGER, WHO ORIGINALLY INSISTED THAT ANY MISSILE TESTED WITH MIRV-TYPE MULTIPLE WARHEADS WOULD BE COUNTED AS MIRVED WHEN DEPLOYED, APPARENTLY WILL BACK AWAY SOMEWHAT FROM THAT POSITION.

16. THE SOVIETS ARE KNOWN TO HAVE DEPLOYED ONLY A SINGLE WARHEAD VERSION OF THEIR BIG NEW SS-18 MISSILES THUS FAR, THOUGH IT HAS BEEN TESTED ABOUT 10 TIMES WITH MULTIPLE WARHEADS.

17. THE UNITED STATES APPARENTLY IS WILLING TO ALLOW THE RUSSIANS TO DEPLOY PERHAPS 100 OF THESE BIG MISSILES AND COUNT THEM AS SINGLE WARHEADS, IF THE RUSSIANS AGREE THAT THEY WILL NOT FIELD ANY NEWER MISSILES THAT HAVE BOTH A SINGLE-WARHEAD AND MULTIPLE-WARHEAD CAPABILITY.

18. ALL TOLD, THE RUSSIANS ARE ALLOWED SLIGHTLY MORE THAN 300 OF THESE BIG MISSILES AND IT IS ASSUMED THE REMAINDER WILL BE COUNTED AS MIRVED.

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19. THOUGH THE SOVIETS HAVE TESTED THE SS-18 WITH MIRVS, SOME U.S. OFFICIALS BELIEVE THERE HAVE NOT BEEN ENOUGH TESTS FOR THE SOVIETS TO HAVE CONFIDENCE IN IT AS AN ACCURATE MTRU WEAPON.

20. THUS, THEY BELIEVE THAT THERE IS LITTLE RISK IN ALLOWING THE SOVIETS TO COUNT SOME MISSILES AS CARRYING ONLY ONE WARHEAD.

21. THIS ARRANGEMENT IS VIEWED AS ALMOST CERTAIN TO DRAW CRITICISM FROM SOME ON CAPITOL HILL, INCLUDING SEN. HENRY M. JACKSON (D-WASH.).

22. PRESUMABLY, IT WILL BE ARGUED BY CRITICS THAT THE UNITED STATES WILL NOT BE ABLE TO TELL IF THE SOVIETS AT SOME POINT CONVERT THE SINGLE-WARHEAD SS-18 TO A MULTIPLE-WARHEAD VERSION.

23. THE UNITED STATES IS ALSO KNOWN TO BE SHIFTING ITS POSITION ON THE NEW RUSSIAN "BACKFIRE" BOMBER. ORIGINALLY THIS NEW TWIN-JET BOMBER WAS NOT EVEN MENTIONED IN THE PROPOSED NEW ARMS ACCORD TO BE SIGNED LATER THIS YEAR.

24. NOW, HOWEVER, THE ADMINISTRATION APPARENTLY WANTS THE
RUSSIANS TO COUNT IT IN THE TOTAL OF 2,400 INDIVIDUAL
STRATEGIC WEAPONS EACH SIDE IS ALLOWED. INGERSOLL

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